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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SUBJECT: "Tomatoes - Put 'em Up!"--Information from canning specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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The green light's on red...these days. The red- as every smart home canner knows - is the vivid red of tomatoes. And the "go ahead" signal of the season is "put 'em up!"

Canning at home is one way to assure your family of an adequate supply of tomatoes next winter. As you've heard...the prospect now is that there will be less commercially canned tomatoes and tomato juice available for civilians this season than there were last year. This means point values will likely be high. So that's your cue to store up blue points by canning jars and jars of red tomatoes and tomato juice.

Tomatoes are the easiest of all vegetables to can...and the only common garden vegetable that doesn't require a pressure canner. You can put up your garden surplus of tomatoes or the tomatoes you buy (when the market's favorable) in a boiling water bath.

Here are some suggestions from home canning specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for getting a good pack.

Begin with good tomatoes. Use only the ones that are ripe...firm and perfect. Don't take a chance on a tomato with a bad spot on it. Even when you cut the spot out...bacteria may lurk behind to ruin the whole batch.

Treat the tomatoes gently so they aren't bruised. You'll find this easy to do if you get just one canner load of tomatoes ready at a time.

Wash the tomatoes in several waters. You can speed up peeling if you'll put the tomatoes in a wire basket or thin cloth...dip them for a minute in boiling water...and then plunge them into cold water. The specialists advise quartering the tomatoes. They heat through more quickly that way. After the tomatoes have come to a rolling boil in their own juice...pack them in the jars and process the jars in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

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